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OBSERVATIONS

ON THE

ELECTION

OF

MEMBERS

FOR THE

BOROUGH OF LUDLOW,

In the YEAR 1780.

By J. BURGESS,

Longa est Injuria, longæ
Ambages. VIRG.

Printed in 1782.

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OF



THE

M. A. M. S. S.

FOR THE

BOROUGH OF LONDON

In the Year 1780.

BY A. BURGES.

Printed by J. G. & J. S. B. at the
Antique Press.

Printed in 1782.

T O T H E
BURGESSES of LUDLOW.

GENTLEMEN,

AMONG the following observations you will perceive some letters, which, perhaps, have already engaged your attention. They are not presented to you again because they are supposed to have any merit either of sentiment, or stile, but solely with a view to preserve in your minds a due sense of the treatment you have received from those persons who make the principal subject of them.

A report prevails that Lord Clive, disgusted with the ungenerous return made him by his present constituents for "his steady support of the constitution," is about to retire to his Borough of Bishop's Castle; and that it is settled by the noble Earl, who chuses Members for the Town of Ludlow, that Frederick Cornwall and

R. P.

iv. DEDICATION.

R. P. Knight, Esqrs. shall be your Representatives in the next Parliament. They deserve every thing from *him* which the most liberal bounty can bestow,

How justly they are intitled to any mark of regard or confidence from you, the following papers will demonstrate. I recommend them to your serious perusal,

And am,

GENTLEMEN,

With great sincerity,

Your devoted humble Servant,

A BURGESS.

Ludlow, July 5, 1782.



OBSERVATIONS.

Prima revocabo exordia Pugnae. Virg.

WHEN the last Parliament was approaching to its end, the despicable state of the borough of Ludlow became a frequent subject of lamentation among the Burgessees. The recollection that an Irish gentleman had been imposed on them, at the last election, in a manner peculiarly disgraceful, excited a general wish, that an effort might be made by the Burgessees to chuse Representatives for themselves. Besides, it gave concern to every thinking mind, that the noble Earl, who took upon him to nominate members for the borough, would send only such to Parliament as would engage to support the measures of the late Administration. Under these circumstances, they looked around them for a gentleman, whose constitutional principles and public spirit might stimulate him to make an attempt to relieve them from the oppression under which

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they

they laboured: they naturally turned their thoughts to R. P. Knight, Esq. This gentleman had never been in Parliament, but had distinguished himself, by supporting Sir George Cornwall, in the county of Hereford, against the Oxford interest, and every exertion of ministerial power.

He had too taken an active part in inducing that county to petition Parliament against the undue influence of the Crown, &c. &c.

The propriety of the choice being generally admitted, application was made to Mr. K. and, the unhappy state of the borough being pointed out to him, he was asked whether, if at the approaching meeting of the Burgesses, he should be proposed for a candidate, he would accept the nomination, and act accordingly. This application was made the beginning of June. A fortnight having passed without any answer being returned, he was written to again, to the same purport. On the 27th, four days *after* the meeting, the following letter was received from him:

(C O P Y .)

“ S I R,

“ I HAVE been favoured with two letters from you, which I beg pardon for not answering sooner. The case was, that I did not chuse to decide upon matters of so much consequence, without



without first consulting my friends. I wished, also, if possible, to prevent any division among those neighbours with whom I have lived so long and so happily. This I think now entirely accomplished, by Lord Powis having recommended my friend, Mr. Cornewall, who, I hope, will have your approbation as sincerely as he has mine. In public matters it can make no difference, as I am to have his interest in Leominster; so that it will be eventually the same as if he had continued for Leominster, and I had been chose for Ludlow. Permit me, nevertheless, to return you, and the rest of my friends at Ludlow, my sincere thanks for your good opinion of me, and to beg of you to continue the same, which it shall be my constant study to deserve. Any favour done to Mr. Cornewall, I shall esteem the same as if done to myself: we differ widely in our politics, but, I believe, we both act from good principles.

I am, S I R,

your most obliged,

and faithful humble servant,

R. P. KNIGHT."

Whitehall, June 22, 1780.

As soon as Mr. Knight's letter appeared, it was conjectured, that it was purposely delayed till this time, that the Burgesses, depending on his consent to the nomination, or, at least, being

ignorant that he would make any objection to it, might not look out for another candidate; and thus the borough, as usual, might remain entirely at the disposal of the noble Earl. That this was the motive of Mr. Knight's silence, and not any want of time to consult his friends, as he pretended, appeared, soon after, from the following fact: that,* prior to the application made to him by the Burgesses of Ludlow, he was engaged to represent the borough of Leominster, at the ensuing election; so that the matter which Mr. K. represents "of so much consequence," (that is, which borough should be so fortunate as to have him for its representative) was already decided. Besides, the letter that came so late might as well have been spared, as Mr. K. arrived at Ludlow the same night with that, and might have communicated the contents of it in *propria persona*.

In the mean time, the Burgesses, apprehensive from the above circumstance, that their application to Mr. K. might be communicated to the noble Earl, and that Mr. P. who had the management of the borough, might be employed to frustrate their design of chusing a Representative for themselves,

* The application to Mr. K. was made in June, whereas the correspondence between him and my Lord Ward, relative to the borough of Leominster, commenced early in April.

felves, applied to Mr. Beale, a country gentleman, of good character, in the neighbourhood, who attended the meeting, and was nominated with general approbation.

It is remarkable, that though the borough of Ludlow sends two members to Parliament, the Burgesses never presume to think of chusing more than one, leaving the other, with due submission, to the nomination of the noble Earl, flattering themselves, that being satisfied with this, he would make no opposition to *their* choice. Besides, not doubting that he would nominate Lord Clive, many gentlemen, inclined to think favourably of his Lordship, were in hopes, that not being in want of either wealth or honours, and seeing the miserable state to which the country was reduced, he would no longer vote, on every occasion, with an Administration, which, every day, was adding to our burthens and disgrace. In this charitable hope, however, they were disappointed.

Not many days elapsed, after the nomination of Mr. Beale, before the noble Earl appeared, attended by two candidates, Lord Clive and Mr. Cornwall. At the same time the following letter was circulating among the Burgesses:

(C O P Y.)

“ S I R,

“ A S you are no stranger to the friendship that subsists between Lord Clive and me, you will
not

not wonder that he has my warmest wishes in the pursuit of his principal object, which is, that of being elected again to represent the borough of Ludlow.

" Mr. Frederick Cornwall, jun. a relation of mine, has been proposed as the other candidate ; a gentleman, whose family has been long connected with the town, and whose principles are irreproachable.

" I am sensible I have no right, nor shall I presume to interfere further in the election, than to express my hopes, that both these deserving candidates may meet with your approbation and support.

P O W I S."

Ludlow, June 24, 1780.

His Lordship says, " Mr. Cornwall has been proposed." He was not proposed at the * Meeting. Who proposed him, and who was the cause of this proposal, appears from Mr. Knight's letter, which gave the first intimation of his being a candidate for the borough of Ludlow. What his Lordship meant by " Mr. Cornwall's irreproachable principles," has never been discovered to this

* The reason Mr. C. gave the Burgesses for not attending the Meeting was curious ; " That he was apprehensive, that his appearance there would create a suspicion in the noble Earl, that he was desirous of gaining an interest in the borough independent of *him*."

this day. If he meant political principles, it may be said, without want of candour, that he never had any. On every occasion, he supported Lord North; and that Minister was so variable, so inconsistent, and so contradictory, both in his sentiments and conduct, that those extraordinary personages, who supported him in all his variations, inconsistencies, and contradictions, may be fairly said to be directed by no principle at all.

It was observed, that though the noble Earl seemed sensible, "that he had no right to interfere in the election," yet he did not scruple to do it. However, "he will not presume to interfere further." How well he kept his word will appear from his subsequent conduct.

As only one candidate was nominated at the Meeting, on the 20th of June, no mention being made of Lord Clive by his friends who were present (which was thought somewhat extraordinary) the following advertisement appeared in the papers:

"Borough of Ludlow, in the county of Salop.

"At a meeting of the Burgesses of the borough of Ludlow this day, in consequence of an advertisement in the public papers, to consider of proper persons to represent them in Parliament, Thomas Beale, Esq. of the Heath, was unanimously nominated one of the candidates to represent the said borough in Parliament, at the ensuing

fuing election ; and, at the same time, the meeting of Burgeses to consider of another proper person to represent them in Parliament, was adjourned to Tuesday the 25th of July next, at the Market-House, in the said borough, at ten o'clock in the forenoon.

“ *Angel Inn, Ludlow, June 20, 1780.*”

A few days after appeared the following curious address :

“ To the worthy Electors of Ludlow.

“ GENTLEMEN,

“ Having this day, in conjunction with Mr. Cornwall, canvassed the town of Ludlow, and been honoured with a very general approbation, I take the liberty of applying in this manner to such of you as reside at a distance, and to whom, for that reason, I cannot so immediately pay a personal attention. The height of my ambition is to continue one of the Members for this independent and respectable borough. My conduct, hitherto, has been steady in support of the constitution, unbiassed by any other consideration than that of my duty as a representative of the people of England ; and in a just sense of that duty, I now presume to solicit your votes at the next general election.

I am, Gentlemen,

Your obliged and faithful humble servant,

Oakley-park, 24th June,

C. L I V E

1780.

In justice to Mr. P. who is supposed to have the direction of all matters of consequence relative to his Lordship, it is but fair to observe that he had written an address to the Burgeses to be signed by his Lordship and Mr. Cornewall, in amicable conjunction, which his Lordship would not agree to, shrewdly remarking, "that to please the Burgeses of Ludlow it would be proper to say something about the independence of the borough, and his duty as a representative of the people of England;" which was done according to his Lordship's intimation.

As an antidote to this poison appeared the following:

Borough of Ludlow, in the county of Salop.

Lord Clive, in his address to the worthy electors of the borough of Ludlow, says, "My conduct, hitherto, has been steady in support of the constitution, unbiassed by any other consideration than that of my duty as a representative of the people of England;" and yet this noble Lord has, ever since he has been in Parliament, voted with Administration on all questions, and on all occasions whatsoever, and in the present session has voted against the petitions of the people; against Mr. Burke's plan of œconomy; against purifying the House of Commons by excluding contractors; against the disclosure of the pension list, that the people of England might know to whom their

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money

money is given ; and even when a large majority were ashamed not to acknowledge, " That the influence of the Crown had increased, and ought to be diminished," Lord Clive still adhered to the Minister, in his blushing minority, and affirmed the contrary;—and yet this noble Lord talks of his supporting the constitution !

It is to be hoped that the Burgesses of Ludlow will not be captivated by high-sounding and unmeaning words ; but examine a man's conduct in Parliament before they judge whether he has any regard for the constitution, or does his duty as a representative of the people of England. It would have been more becoming in his Lordship to have followed Mr. Cornewall's example, who, having nothing to say in justification of his parliamentary conduct, had the discretion to pass it over in silence. //

The few weeks that passed before the next meeting was employed by the noble Earl and his candidates in an active and unremitted canvas. We saw him, with these at his heels, pass, with his usual rapidity, through this and the neighbouring counties, in search of Burgesses. The fatigues he endured, the difficulties he struggled with, to gratify Lord C. " in the principal object of his ambition," must have made an impression on that noble Lord, which, it is probable, no length of time, or wish of independence on *his* part, will ever obliterate. Country gentlemen, who knew
that

that Peers sometimes interposed in elections for Members of the House of Commons, were, however, surprized at seeing the noble Earl canvas *in person* for the candidates he supported. This was an infringement of the privileges of the electors of Great Britain, as daring as it was unprecedented.

The meeting on the 24th of July was attended by friends to each candidate, but Mr. Beale's party appeared the most numerous and respectable. The chief magistrate, after taking notice that the nomination of Mr. Beale had taken place at the last meeting, and that no other candidate had been nominated in a proper and constitutional manner, observed, that the present meeting was held, according to the advertisement, for the nomination of a second. Lord C. arose, and told the Burgesses, " that he should take this opportunity to propose himself." No answer was made to this declaration; and it was remarked, that as no one could be procured to propose his Lordship, so no one thought proper to second the motion, or say a syllable in support of it. R. P. Knight, Esq. begged leave to recommend Mr. Cornwall to the Burgesses as a proper person to represent them in Parliament, at the ensuing election. It was immediately observed, that the recommendation of Mr. C. came with great impropriety from Mr. Knight; that he had taken an active part in promoting a

petition from the county of Hereford; that Mr. C. had voted against that petition, and had, on all occasions, supported an Administration, which Mr. K. had as uniformly opposed. Mr. K. was asked, if there was any consistency, or even decency in such conduct; and it was added, that if the people of England expected any good from such patriots, they would be miserably disappointed. Mr. K. replied, "that Mr. C. was his friend; that he was no bigot in politics; and that, for aught he knew, that gentleman might be as much in the right in supporting Administration, as he was in opposing it." A few days after the following letter appeared in the public prints, addressed

To R. P. K N I G H T, Esq.

————— *Nil fuit unquam*

Tam dispar sibi. Hor.

S I R,

I think it my duty to state to the public the sentiments you delivered at the meeting of the Burgesses of this place, on the 25th of last month, that they may not be deceived in a man, of whom, from his past conduct, they entertain the fairest hopes; and that they may know what little good is to be expected from the late petitioners, when they contradict themselves, and desert their principles. At that meeting you proposed Mr. C. the present Member for Leominster, as a proper person

person to represent the borough of Ludlow at the next election. It was observed, that this proposal came with a bad grace from you, who were very active in promoting a petition from the county of Hereford, and at the meeting warmly condemned the present Ministry and their measures; as the gentleman you recommended had voted against that petition, and had supported the Ministry ever since he had been in Parliament. Your answer was " that the gentleman was your friend; that you were no bigot in politics; and that, for aught you knew, that gentleman might be as much in the right in supporting Administration, as you in opposing it." If so, why do you oppose the Ministry? If you think it possible, that the Ministry may be right, why do you endeavour to clog the wheels of Government by opposing them; uncertain, at the same time, whether you are doing service or mischief to your country? As an honest man you ought not to oppose them, unless from a conviction of their being wrong, and if you are convinced of their being wrong, you must, of consequence, think every one so that supports them.

If you are right, Mr. C. must be wrong: If you think yourself a friend to your country, you must think Mr. C. an enemy, and as such you ought to oppose him; or, if your friendship for him is stronger than your regard for your country, and will not suffer you to do that, you ought not

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to recommend him, or endeavour to procure him a seat in Parliament. You have opposed Mr. Harley, in the county of Hereford, and your friends say, that you are ready, if necessary, to oppose him again; and why? because he supports the Ministry in their impolitic and destructive measures. And pray, Sir, has not Mr. Cornwall uniformly done the same? An instance or two may be discovered, in which Administration have permitted Mr. Harley to vote against them, but not one can be found in which they have granted the same indulgence to Mr. Cornwall. What is it that attaches you to the political character of Mr. C. and at the same time prejudices you against the political character of Mr. H?

Is not this bigotry, and bigotry of the weakest kind? As to any other kind of bigotry in *politics*, than this of your's, I never heard of it.

In *Religion*, he is justly esteemed a bigot, who thinks his own opinions right, and those of others wrong; because various opinions are there held, of, perhaps, equal uncertainty; and, because speculative opinions are there of inferior consequence, our principal business being to take care that our lives are in the right. But a manly and decisive line of conduct, adopted, after much reflection on political subjects, and adhered to with firmness, cannot be *bigotry*: it is *consistency* and *principle*. I am sorry Mr. K. is to learn this.

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If you begin to think you were wrong in condemning Administration, petitioning, &c. for God's sake acknowledge your repentance, and endeavour, by the zeal of a profelyte, to make some atonement for the errors of a sinner. Mr. Harley will kindly overlook your past offences, and Lord Bateman, with the industry of a preceptor, will cherish your new principles till they grow to a maturity, which Administration itself must admire and reward. That this is likely to be the case, is far from improbable. When a man, after declaiming and petitioning against the undue influence of the Crown, assists the Minister in procuring another dependent House of Commons, by supporting candidates notoriously attached to Administration; when he refuses a borough, which expected nothing from him but an honest and disinterested line of conduct; and, with singular care, provides himself with one which requires nothing from him but money, regardless of his principles or consistency, the petitioners, and all other advocates for a free and independent Parliament, will look on him as an apostate, and guard against him as an enemy.

I congratulate you, Sir, on the happy situation you have placed yourself in—change sentiments, change conduct, as often as you please, the Burgesses of Leominster must not reproach their young patriot with inconsistency: he is under no obligation

obligation to *them*; and, therefore, may act as he pleases.

Your generous and grateful behaviour to the Burgesses of Ludlow, I shall make the subject of another letter; and, in the mean time, am, with due respect, your very humble servant,

A B U R G E S S.

Ludlow, Aug. 2, 1780.

This address had not the good effect expected from it. It was hoped, that it would have convinced Mr. K. of the inconsistency of his political conduct, and have induced him to observe, at least, a neutrality, on the present occasion: but this hope soon vanished; for we saw him supporting the nomination of the noble Earl, and canvassing, in person, on behalf of his candidates. Yet Mr. Beale was his old acquaintance, and one of those "neighbours with whom he had lived so long and so happily;" but was now to be sacrificed to gratify the pride of a noble Lord, whose political character he was known to detest, and to gain the good-will of Mr. P. whose wretched expedients he affected to despise.

In consequence of this extraordinary conduct, the following letter was addressed

To

TO R. P. KNIGHT, Esq.

——— *Videt meliora probat que*
Deteriora sequitur, OVID.

SIR,

AT the request of several Burgeſſes, who are anxious to have it forgotten, that they were ever ſo indiſcreet as to wiſh to be repreſented in Parliament by Mr. K. I ſhall paſs over your generous and grateful behaviour to *them*, and return to the obligation they are under to you, for your recommendation of Mr. C.

Exclusive of his known attachment to Adminiſtration (which, to a petitioning patriot, ought ſurely to be *ſome* objection) can you think Mr. C. a proper perſon to repreſent us in Parliament? Conſider, Sir, his almoſt total loſs of hearing. It is with regret I mention a perſonal defect; but, Sir, when private defects may be productive of public miſchief, they are not to be overlooked. Mr. C. muſt be a mere ſpectator in the Houſe of Commons: he cannot hear a ſyllable of the debates. The eloquence of a Burke, or the fire of a Fox, cannot either move or warm him. He muſt be directed when to ſay Aye or No; and, unleſs his couſin Charles is always at his elbow, may make miſtakes that may offend his friends in Adminiſtration, and, perhaps, leſſen your regard

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for him. To procure a petitioning patriot to propose Mr. C. was an ingenious contrivance.— It was part of the hasty and unfortunate treaty concluded with that gentleman, under the auspices of a noble Earl. They may now congratulate each other, on the ample revenge they have taken for your former enmity to their friend Mr. Harley, and the hostilities you commenced in Herefordshire against their more valuable friends in Administration, a few months ago.

Besides, Sir, are you not assisting a Peer in his endeavours to chuse members for the House of Commons. Had not a noble Earl printed two hundred circular letters, directing the Burgesses to chuse Lord Clive and Mr. Cornewall, whom his Lordship is pleased to stile “two deserving candidates,” because they have followed his example, in voting for the Ministry ever since they have been in Parliament? Has he not canvassed for these gentlemen as openly as if he himself was one of the candidates? I need not tell *you*, Sir, that by means of the Cornish boroughs, Cinque ports, &c. Administration elect a part of the House of Commons, and, that if the House of Peers are permitted to elect another part, there is an end of the Constitution of this country, of which you profess yourself so warm an admirer. The three estates are the pride of Britain, and envy of the universe, while they continue

continue "*Ponderibus librata suis*; but once destroy the equilibrium, the whole fabric falls to pieces, and nothing will remain but a few shining fragments to excite, from age to age, the pity of mankind, for the destruction of the noblest work of human genius.

I care not for such a man as Mr. Harley, nor will I waste a drop of ink in animadverting on his conduct: the public know *him*, and cannot be deceived by him. But, Sir, should there be a young man, whose fortunes are splendid; whose * understanding is excellent; who has cultivated it by education, and improved it by travel; who, after having observed the defects in the government of other countries, returns home more closely attached to the admirable Constitution of his own; who seizes, with youthful ardour, the first opportunity of stepping forth as a champion for the people against a dangerous and desperate Administration, which, in the space of five years, by an increased debt of above sixty millions, has brought the nation to the very verge of bankruptcy and beggary; who insists upon it, before an assembled county—"that the people of England, with diminished ability, cannot bear an increasing load of taxes; that the public mo-

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* It must be acknowledged, that this portrait was drawn from the partial representations of Mr. K's friends, and has been found, on comparison, to be very unlike the original.

“ney must be expended with more frugality;
 “that the influence of the Crown must be resist-
 “ed; that the present Ministry are the cause of
 “all our misfortunes, &c. &c.”

Should we see, Sir, this flaming patriot, who so lately scorched us in the meridian, rapidly descending to the horizon; should we see him assisting the Minister to procure another dependent House of Commons, by supporting candidates notoriously attached to Administration; should we see him finish his career of public virtue, by selecting for himself, with curious felicity, one of the most venal boroughs in the kingdom,

“Who but must laugh, if such a man there be?”

“Who would not weep if Atticus were he?” POPE.

I shall now, Sir, close a correspondence, into which nothing should have drawn me but a sincere conviction, that the civil salvation of this country depends on our having, speedily, a Parliament more pure and uncorrupt than the present; which is only to be obtained by our chusing those persons, who have uniformly approved themselves friends to the people, and rejecting those, whose fluctuating conduct and inconsistency have rendered them unworthy of public confidence.

I remain, with due respect,

Your very humble servant,

A BURGESS.

Ludlow, Aug. 16, 1780.

Soon after appeared the following address :

To the BURGESSES of LUDLOW.

GENTLEMEN,

AS Lord Clive and Mr. Cornwall, two of the candidates for this borough, have procured opinions on a case stated by them, " That sons of sworn Burgesses, who were born before their fathers were sworn, and persons, who have married the daughters of sworn Burgesses, who were also born before their fathers were sworn, have no right to vote at elections for members of this borough, notwithstanding such persons have voted at all past elections, all persons who are in the predicament abovementioned, and wish to preserve their right of voting, are earnestly requested to meet at the Bear and White Lion, in Ludlow, on Monday, the 25th day of September next, at ten o'clock in the forenoon, to consider what measures are necessary to be pursued to maintain their rights and privileges; which they and their posterity will be deprived of, if proper steps are not taken to prevent the said opinions being carried into execution

Ludlow, Aug. 30, 1780.

By way of reply to this, appeared the following address :

To

To the worthy Burgeſſes of Ludlow, particularly to thoſe Burgeſſes who were born before their fathers were ſworn.

“An anonymous advertisement has appeared in the public prints, which, by the mode in which it is expreſſed, is evidently calculated to mislead and deceive you.”

The answer we give under our hands to the inſinuation conveyed in that advertisement, is, that ſuch inſinuation is founded in falſehood.

We are confident you will not be the dupes of ſuch low artifice, and, on every occaſion, we pledge ourſelves the friends of your rights, and the aſſerters of your privileges.

C L I V E.

FRED. CORNEWALL.

Ludlow 9th Sept. 1780.

Q. What mean the inverted commas in the firſt paragraph, which is no quotation?

How punctually theſe “deſerving candidates” fulfilled their engagement will appear hereafter.

The above paper was ſaid to be the production of Mr. P. and from the unlettered ſtile, and the modeſty with which he contradicts a well-known fact, no doubt can be entertained of it.

As the election was now approaching, Mr. Beale thought proper to addreſs the following

To

To the worthy Electors of the borough of
LUDLOW.

Gentlemen,

The day of election for the borough of Ludlow being fixed for Friday the 15th instant, I request the favour of your early attendance on that day, in my behalf. Without any application on my part, I was called upon by the Burgeſſes to aſſiſt them in recovering the independence of the borough, and I have no doubt but I ſhall have the ſupport of every true friend to his country, in ſo good and conſtitutional a deſign.

The open and avowed interpoſition of a Peer of the realm in favour of my opponents, has, I am ſenſible, given them an advantage over me; but I flatter myſelf that the exertions of my friends who wiſh to ſee the next Parliament free and uncorrupt, will render ſuch interpoſition ineffectual.

If I have the honour to be choſen one of your representatives, you may depend upon it, that my conduct in Parliament ſhall be influenced by nothing but a ſincere regard for the public good; as I have no other view but that of preſerving the liberties, and promoting the welfare of the people of England.

I am, with great regard,

Gentlemen,

Your faithful humble ſervant,

THOMAS BEALE.

Ludlow, Sept. 8, 1780.

About

About this time appeared the following observations in a country paper :

Extract of a letter from Ludlow, Sept. 10.

“ The efforts making here to send an honest and an independent man to Parliament have, at length, attracted the notice of the Ministry, who have issued orders to every person, who is a Burgess, in the army, navy, Post-office, Stamp-office, Excise, &c. to vote for their friends Lord Clive and Mr. Cornwall. This conduct does honor to the Ministry, as these gentlemen have faithfully served them for seven years, and deserve every encouragement and support it is in the power of Administration to give. Undoubtedly, Ministry do *their* duty in supporting gentlemen, who, deaf to the voice of reason, and regardless of a nation's sufferings, prefer the service of Administration to the welfare of their country ; but, at the same time, the people of England should do *their* duty, in resisting, by every means in their power, such open and barefaced attempts to procure another dependent House of Commons, remembering, that all the salutary bills, proposed in the last session, tending to preserve the liberties, and promote the ease and happiness of the people, were rejected by a House of Commons, controlled and directed by a Minister, at his pleasure.”

Mr.

Mr. Beale now took a view of his situation and strength; and, having done it, was apprehensive that his opponents would succeed by a very small majority. Besides, it was given out, that if he was returned he would be petitioned against, and every means possible made use of to frustrate his election, as the noble Earl was determined to spend half his fortune rather than lose his privilege of choosing Members for the borough of Ludlow.

Mr. B. therefore declined, and the noble Earl had again the satisfaction to compliment Administration with two Members most devoutly at their service. To do justice to his Members, they answered his most sanguine expectations; and proved, by their Parliamentary conduct, that they merited the appellation of "deserving candidates;" with which he had distinguished them.

In the county of Montgomery, his Lordship was not equally successful. His design, prepared with much ingenuity by Mr. P. the Guy Faux of the business, was discovered, and the mischievous effects, it was intended to produce, prevented. The following account of the plot, as given to the public at the time, is worth preserving:

Extract of a letter from Montgomery, July 6.

"Our meeting, to consider of a proper person to represent the county at the ensuing election, is just over. Thanks to the good sense and spirit

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of the freeholders, one of the vilest schemes that art and profligacy ever contrived, is frustrated. At the last General Election Mr. Mostyn Owen was recommended and supported by a noble Earl. He was opposed by Mr. Wynne, supported by Sir W. Wynne; and after a long and expensive contest, was chosen by a great majority. Mr. Owen, on coming to Parliament, adopted a manly and disinterested line of conduct, attaching himself to no party, but voting sometimes with the Minister, and sometimes against him. This conduct offended the noble Lord, who expected him fervilely to follow his example, and support the Minister at all times, and at all events. The freeholders applauded his conduct, and shewed a warm desire of chusing him again at the approaching election. Aware of their design, the noble Earl solicited his quondam opponent and rival in the county to join his interest with his to prevent the election of Mr. Owen; and, as the price of this co-operation, agreed that Mr. K. a friend of his, should have the county, to the certain ruin of his own interest. To counteract this iniquitous plot a county meeting was held. Mr. Owen, with one voice, was called for by the freeholders, and most earnestly intreated to represent them again in Parliament. Sensible of the formidable opposition formed against him, this gentleman would fain have declined; but the solicitations of
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the freeholders increasing and rising in warmth, he was prevailed on to gratify their inclination. Mr. K. was present, but declared his ready acquiescence in the general voice of the county.

“ May this noble spirit, this generous attachment to men of integrity and public virtue, spread from county to county, and the glorious consequence be—a perfectly free and independent Parliament !

“ May the borough follow the bright example of the county, and be no longer at the disposal of a man, who is labouring to extinguish every spark of virtue and public spirit, as far as either his authority or influence extend.”

Soon after a country gentleman, in the neighbourhood, formed a design of rescuing the borough out of his Lordship's hands; but the noble Earl canvassing the town of Montgomery in person, and giving out that he had a certain majority of eight votes, the design was dropped, and the borough was again given to Mr. Keene, Lady North's brother.

His worthy coadjutor, Mr. K. having had the satisfaction to see the election at Ludlow terminate according to his wishes, repaired to Leominster, confident of having no opposition there. The curious transactions of that day cannot be better described than in the following

Extract of a letter from Leominster, Sept. 26,

“ Our election, which was a few days ago, is likely to be attended with serious consequences.

“ The only candidates who had declared themselves, and canvassed the town were, Lord Bateman and R. P. Knight, Esq. On the day of election, Thomas Mytten, Esq. of North Cleebury, offered himself a candidate; and, at the close of the poll, was found to have 44 votes.

“ This gentleman stepped forth on this occasion, from the purest and noblest motive, that of endeavouring to put a stop to the progress of corruption which had so long prevailed in this wretched and venal borough; and from the same motive, was supported by the few honest and disinterested men in it. The practice here, for many years, has been to look out for candidates who have large fortunes, and who, having nothing but money to recommend them, are willing to give a good price for a seat in Parliament. On assurances being given that they will do as preceding candidates have done, the Burgesses rely on such assurances, and engage their votes. A few days after the Members take their seats Five Guineas are paid, by order of each of the candidates, to every person within the borough who had promised them a vote. Out of about 500 Burgesses, it is a well-known fact, that there are not above fifty who do not receive Ten Guineas each (that is
Five

Five from each candidate) for their votes. Mr. Mytten proposed to have the bribery-oath administered to every Burgeſs; but on conſidering the fatal conſequences that might accrue to him, and his few honeſt friends, from ſuch a ſtep, he thought proper to decline doing it.

“ P. S. A ſingular circumſtance attended this election. Mr. Harley, who is not very popular here, on the day of election repreſented Lord Bateman, and was chaired for him. This gentleman, knowing that the ruling paſſion of mankind is ſelf-intereſt, provided himſelf with a large quantity of ſilver, which he threw plentifully around him, as he paſſed through the ſtreets, and thereby purchaſed much noiſe and acclamation. Behind him advanced the patriotic Mr. K. but he having no ſilver for the populace, a ſullen ſilence reigned around, and, whiſt every eye was fixed on the arch contractor,

“ The youthful Patriot paſſed unheeded by.”

This election was not ſo advantageous to the Burgeſſes ~~as former~~ as former ones had been, from the unfortunate circumſtance of their having a Patriot for one of their repreſentatives; as, on that account, payment was delayed to the month of January; though it was then paid, with little caution, by his agent, who went from houſe to houſe, and paid Five Guineas to every Burgeſs
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who voted for him, justly passing by the indifference 44 who voted against him. „

Soon after the following observations on this gentleman's conduct appeared in an

Extract of a letter from Hereford, Jan. 17, 1781.

“ We are all peace and quietness in this city, but not so able to support the cause of liberty as we could wish. We have the same representatives we had in the last Parliament; one devoted to Administration; the other a warm friend to the people.

“ To support the cause of the latter, and strengthen the petitioning party in this place, a design was formed to bring in R. P. Knight, Esq. at the late election, in conjunction with Mr. Scudamore; that gentleman having distinguished himself very much by his activity in promoting a petition from this county.

“ This design got wind too soon, and was counteracted and frustrated by the Baronet and his party.—Short-sighted mortals as we are! This disappointment was a very fortunate one; for, in a few months, we saw our patriotic leader, Mr. K. supporting Lord Clive and Mr. Cornwall, in the Borough of Ludlow, notwithstanding those gentlemen had voted against our petition, and were known to be attached to an administration, which

which Mr. K. did not scruple to say, at the county meeting, were pursuing measures that would involve this country in beggary and ruin.

“ Scarce recovered from the surprize we were thrown into by this sudden change of principles and conduct, we saw him a candidate for the Borough of Leominster; a place no patriot ever thought of representing, for obvious reasons. Mr. K.—’s motives for wishing to represent this borough were unknown, till his friends thought proper to speak of it as an act of refined generalship in that gentleman;—“ that having an eye to the county, he has judiciously taken post on the frontiers, that he might, when occasion offered, march with more facility to the center, and take possession of the whole.”

“ This was, undoubtedly, a noble plan, and is an additional proof of the enterprising genius of this young man. If it is true that Mr. K. in taking possession of Leominster had an eye to the county, that flattering prospect must have long disappeared! The freeholders of this county will never give their votes to a man, who, after professing himself a steady friend to the constitution, and encouraging them with much warmth, to petition parliament, supported ministerial candidates against an independent country gentleman, and assisted a peer in his unconstitutional endeavours to chuse members for the House of Commons,

tions. We drop all connections with this gentleman for ever, and leave him to enjoy those more honourable he has formed with the Earl of P. Lord C. and Mr. Probert; the former of whom, we hear, has introduced him to his particular friend, Lord Sandwich, who, no doubt, will confirm him in his new system of politics, and, by his conversation and example, inspire him with an ambition of acquiring that amiable and moral character, by which his Lordship is so eminently distinguished.

“ We are happy to find that Sir George still retains his integrity, but are under some uneasiness about him, knowing the consequence of evil communication. ”

As a reward for his gallant services at the election, the noble Earl, soon after, recommended him as a proper person to fill a vacancy in the corporation of Ludlow; an honour reserved for his Lordship's confidential and approved good friends. We now see him arrived at the height of his ambition; the patriotic representative of an uncorrupt borough; the unbiassed member of a respectable corporation; happy in the friendship of my Lord W*. more happy in the friendship

* Mr. T. Ward, of Leominster, commonly so called, Mr. Knight's confidential friend; who has, for many years, managed the affairs of that Borough, with equal credit to himself and advantage to his employers.

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of my Lord P. and now leave him in the full possession of these much-envied honours, to turn our attention to the state of the Borough of Ludlow, after the late election.

In consequence of the meeting of the Burgeſſes on the 26th of September, the following appeared :

Borough of Ludlow, in the county of Salop.

At a meeting of the Burgeſſes, according to a public advertisement, at the White Lion, in Ludlow, on Monday the 25th of September, 1780.

Resolved,

As the corporation of Ludlow did not come to any determination on the petitions presented to them, on Saturday the 16th of last month, by the sons of Burgeſſes, but propose to come to a final resolution on that matter, on the 13th day of October next ; and as Lord Clive and Mr. Cornwall, the present members for this borough, have, in a hand-bill signed with their names, and addressed particularly to the petitioners, solemnly pledged themselves "to be, on every occasion, the friends of their rights, and the asserters of their privileges ;"

Resolved,

That we will wait the event of that day, confiding in the justice of our claims, and the declarations of our representatives, who, we have

no doubt, will procure our admission into the class of sworn Burgesses, on that day, if they seriously and earnestly maintain our cause, and are supported by their friends in the chamber;

But if they mean merely to give a vote, without making use of their interest in the corporation, in favour of the petitioners, we shall look on such conduct as insidious, calculated to gain a momentary popularity, deceive the Burgesses, and prevent, as far as is in their power, the recovery of their rights and privileges.

THOMAS BLAINEY,
Clerk to the Meeting.

Ludlow, Sept. 25, 1780.

On the 13th of October, this matter was debated in the chamber, but our worthy Representatives, notwithstanding their solemn promises made to the petitioners, did not say a syllable in support of their claims, but readily acquiesced in every thing said against them. The only persons who openly opposed their claims, were Frederick Cornewall, sen. Thomas Knight, and Somerset Davies, Esqrs. yet, strange to tell, these gentlemen, a few weeks before, canvassed these very persons, and were of opinion they had a right to vote for Members of the Borough.

It was expected that Mr. K. who was now in the chamber, in conformity to his political principles,

principles, would have taken a decided part in favour of the Burgesses; but in this, as in every other expectation of service or good-will from this gentleman, they were disappointed.

Soon after, the following letter was addressed to him :

Ecce iterum Crispinus !

Juv.

SIR,

It was given out by your friends, that the persons claiming to be Burgesses of Ludlow would find an advocate in you, and were more likely to meet with success now the corporation is honoured with a Member of professed constitutional principles.

They urged that, besides being moved by the equity of their claims, founded on the usage of the Borough, it would occur to a gentleman of Mr. K.—'s political sagacity, that the admission of these persons would promote the independence of the Borough, by increasing the number of its electors; and they insisted upon it, that a gentleman, who had expatiated so frequently and warmly on the necessity of restoring independence to the Commons House of Parliament, would readily support a measure, that, in some degree, had that tendency. They flattered themselves, Sir, that having, in a moment of satiety and indifference, deserted the first object of a youthful passion, you would have eagerly seized an op-

portunity of returning to her arms, and that your embraces would have been warm, in proportion to your absence from her. They did not consider the state of your present attachment; and that the hour of fruition not being come, the time of desertion was not yet arrived.

In the first moment of your political life, we saw you leading on the Freeholders of the county of Hereford to petition Parliament with an ardour that did credit to your feelings, and heard you harangue them in a language that did honour to your understanding. The Burgeesses of Ludlow admired your public spirit; and wished for such a champion to rescue them from dependence and disgrace. For above half a century they had had no share in the choice of their Representatives; a noble Earl regularly nominating them, without consulting either their inclination or their interest. They wished to distinguish the æra of their political liberty by the choice of a man, whose youthful activity in support of the constitution of his country, had distinguished him above his equals. They made application to *you*. What use you have made of that application, I will not tell the public: I am not yet so much your enemy as to wish them to know it. The consequence was an alliance formed (with the approbation of Mr. Probert) between the Earl of P. Lord C. and you. Your friends call it a triumvirate; in which we shall

shall soon see you acting the part of Octavius, and stripping Lepidus and Antony of their share of power and influence *. One article of this treaty was said to be, that you should relieve Mr. Cornwall in his uneasy and expensive station at Leominster ; and that, on Lord Clive's being made a Peer, you should succeed him, on better terms, in the Borough of Ludlow. If the Borough of Ludlow, Sir, had been the object of your desires, how easy and honourable had been the acquisition ! You need not have attended the levee of a noble Earl, or solicited the powerful recommendation of Mr. Probert. You need not have opposed an independent country gentleman, your most intimate friend, in favour of ministerial candidates, nor canvassed against those very persons who had generously offered you their assistance in the Borough of Ludlow, and had a demand on your honour for, at least, a perfect neutrality.

It would have been given in a manner that would have done credit to the Burgesses, and brought no disgrace upon *you*. *They* would not have bargained for a large sum of money to be paid on your taking your seat in Parliament ; nor

* This gentleman's friends seem to have too good an opinion of his ingenuity ; or, at least, are not aware that they pay a compliment to his understanding at the expence of his integrity.

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would *you* have been reproached with practices that render patriotism ridiculous.

They would have set you an example of disinterestedness, which patriot virtue might have copied without blushing.

You might have led them on from conquering to conquer. By defeating the corporation in their attacks on the rights of the Burgesses, you would have inflamed their zeal, and added gratitude to their affection; and, by increasing the number of the electors, would only have increased the number of your friends.

My Lord Sheffield's triumph over the corporation of Coventry would have been inferior to your's over the tyranny of another; for while he gave a feeble voice, in support of an unprincipled administration, in return for his regiment and his title, you might have raised yours, unbiassed and unbought, in support of public liberty, and the constitution of your country.

Your name, then, Sir, might have been mentioned with honour, and D—— Castle might have been deemed the abode of public virtue: what it is now the abode of, I leave to your own feelings; and, am, Sir, with due respect,

Your humble servant,

A BURGESS.

Ludlow, Oct. 20, 1780.

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The sons of Burgeſſes finding their petitions were haughtily rejected by the corporation, though they had candidly ſtated in their ſeveral petitions, that perſons in their own families had been admitted in the very predicament they ſtood, (which ſhewed the folly as well as injuſtice of ſuch rejection) and that no hopes of ſupport or ſervice could be expected from their Representatives, formed an aſſociation for applying to the Court of King's Bench for redreſs. The conduct of their Representatives, on this occaſion, was eaſily accounted for. Senſible that they were indebted ſolely to the noble Earl for their ſeats in Parliament, and knowing him to be adverſe to the claims of the petitioners, they were only anxious to preſerve his approbation, and totally indifferent about the opinions of conſtituents to whom they were under no obligation. A few weeks after, Lord C. and Mr. C. as members of the corporation, were ſerved with rules from the Court of King's Bench to ſhew cauſe why they reſuſed to comply with the petitions of thoſe perſons who claimed a right to be made Burgeſſes of Ludlow. It was curious to behold theſe gentlemen ſerved with writs by thoſe very perſons to whom they had voluntarily pledged themſelves to be, " on all occaſions, the aſſerters of their rights and privileges." The breach of promiſe ſtared them in the face, and they made a faint overture of ſubſcribing to the ex-
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pence of the prosecution, on the part of the Burgesse; to which no regard was paid.

To prove the sincerity of these offers, the agent for the petitioners was directed to write to Lord C. and Mr. C. requesting the use of papers relative to this business, which were said by their friends to be in their hands, and at the service of the Burgesse. To this application Lord C. answered, " that he would have enquiry made about such papers, and, when he returned into the country, would wait on the agent;" which he never did. Mr. C. returned no answer; but, sometime after, wrote to *his* agent, and after ridiculing the cause and conduct of the petitioners, boasted of his having offered to be at half the expence of the prosecution, and reproached the petitioners with rejecting his proposal with contempt. The truth is, this generous offer was never made; and, therefore, could not be contemptuously rejected.

We will now leave the cause of the petitioners in the Court of King's Bench (a place it naturally rested in for some time) to take a view of the Parliamentary conduct of Lord C. after his memorable declaration " that he had a due sense of his duty as a Representative of the people of England." His Lordship still continued devoted to the service of the Minister, uniformly opposing every constitutional motion, and as uniformly voting on every question, with Administration. As many
bills

bills of consequence to the interests and welfare of the people were at this time about to be brought into Parliament, a friend to his Lordship, who most anxiously wished to see his professions and conduct coincide, addressed the following to him :

My Lord,

In your address to the Burgesses of Ludlow, last Summer, you told them, " that your conduct had been steady in support of the constitution, unbiassed by any other consideration than that of your duty as a Representative of the people of England ; and that, in a just sense of that duty, you presumed to solicit their votes at the approaching election."

Without enquiring in what instances you supported the constitution in the last Parliament, I beg leave to put you in mind of your declaration, " that you have a just sense of your duty as a Representative of the people of England." If therefore any bills are brought into Parliament this session, to correct abuses in the expediture of public money, to reduce exorbitant emoluments of office, to abolish sinecure places and unmerited pensions ; to diminish the unconstitutional influence of the Crown, I have no doubt that " in a just sense of your duty as a Representative of the people of England," you will give those bills all the support in your power.

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It has been said, that your Lordship is beholden to a noble Earl for your seat in Parliament, and that he expects you to follow his example, and support the Minister on all occasions. I flatter myself, my Lord, that your parliamentary conduct will refute this calumny, and prove to your constituents that you are that "steady supporter of the constitution" you profess yourself.

Besides, my Lord, the ingratitude you have experienced from Administration should detach a man of spirit from their service. Your worthy uncle, the Captain, observed to the Burgesses of Ludlow, previous to the election, that though your Lordship had voted with the Ministry, ever since you had been in Parliament, you had not, by so doing, obtained any thing for yourself or friends: and yet, my Lord, to do justice to Administration, though they have not duly rewarded, they have not totally overlooked your services. Before the Captain made this declaration, they had, at your solicitation, given a prebendary to your relation the Archdeacon, and a place in the Ordnance to your friends Messrs. D'Oiley and Strachey.

Such favours as these the discerning Captain, who, perhaps, wisely looks forward to greater, esteems nothing; and, indeed, my Lord, they are nothing, when put in competition with your duty to your constituents and your country. The wealthy grandeur, the super-eminent power of
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this empire, is, perhaps, irrecoverably lost; but by the spirited efforts of your Lordship, and other great and good men, "who have a just sense of their duty as Representatives of the people of England," we yet hope to preserve the liberty and constitution of Britain.

I am, with due respect,

Your Lordship's obedient servant,

A BURGESS.

Ludlow, Jan. 24, 1781.

This friendly admonition had no effect. We still saw him join with the Minister in laying fresh burthens on an impoverished and almost ruined people; and even, in February last, when General Conway made a motion for putting an end to the American war, the acknowledged cause of all our sufferings, his Lordship supported the Minister in his opposition to it.

Here ended our long and patient expectation of some good from his Lordship's "just sense of his duty," &c.—The parliamentary conduct of Lord C. and Mr. C. will never be forgotten by the Burgesses of this place: a virtuous Administration, and the prospect of a peace may, for awhile, banish it from their thoughts; but the oppressive taxes laid on the necessaries of life, and the great addition made to the national debt, (which will

make those taxes perpetual) will recal to their minds the injuries they have received, and the Representatives, to whose selfish or servile conduct they may, in a great measure, be attributed. Gentlemen, who, through two Parliaments, voted with the Minister *on every question*; who supported him in all his mad and ambitious schemes of increasing the Influence of the Crown, and enslaving their fellow-subjects, cannot, by the most candid and indulgent, be supposed to be actuated "by a just sense of their duty as Representatives of the people of England." The ruling passion, which spoke by their voice, and influenced their actions, may remain a secret *here*; but must be discovered when they are called upon to give an account of their conduct in a place, where neither a thirst for wealth, or an eager desire of honours, will be admitted as an excuse for the evils they have been instrumental in entailing on an abused and much-injured people!

But it may be said that these gentlemen (like their gracious Sovereign) have their private virtues; and that these, and the many services they have done the Burgeses, ought not to pass unnoticed.

Mr. C. has, indeed, put two or three Burgeses into the Excise; and, I doubt not, would put more, if his friends were still in the Treasury.

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As to his worthy colleague, I never heard of his doing any service to, or conferring any favour on, any inhabitant of this place, in the many years we have had the honour of being represented by him.

His Lordship is, indeed, indulgent to those gentlemen who delight in rural sports. He allows them to angle where he knows there are no fish; and, I make no doubt, with equal generosity, would permit them to shoot, if his manors afforded no game.

I now turn from these disgusting objects to better;—to the Burgesses proceeding with firmness and perseverance for the recovery of their rights. No sooner were the corporation served with writs, than the Preux Chevalier presented himself as their champion and defender.

This gentleman was neither a Burgess or member of the corporation, but being appointed by his noble master to the government of the town, and invested with the authority of Dictator, it was his duty to take care, *ne quid detrimenti capiat potestas ejus*. Knowing that if the Burgesses succeeded in recovering their rights, their numbers would increase, the independence of the borough be promoted, and the power assumed by the noble Earl of chusing its Representatives be shaken to its foundation, he was determined to do all in his power to counteract their endeavours. To
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accomplish this, a privy council was held at the house of the noble Earl, in this place, consisting of our worthy Representatives, the learned Chaplain of the H— of C—, and a few more gentlemen of approved fidelity and most profound attachment.

An order was issued by the Dictator, that the records, charters, books, &c. of the corporation should be laid before the council; which was done, with all humility, by the Town-Clerk. These venerable relics, which, for ages, had lain undisturbed in peaceful dust, unknown to aldermen, unheard of by common-councilmen, were now forced from their asylum, and transplanted, with fearless indiscretion, to the unsafe abode of mirth and dissipation.

Their dry contents, the jest of claim-disputing law, were here made palatable by a proper mixture of claret, champagne, and burgundy. After a few weeks of gay deliberation, a case was produced, the happy offspring of united talents, bearing the characteristic qualities of the several artists, being marked with the dull caution of the A. the pert insignificance of the C. and the shrewd sagacity of the L. With triumphant expedition it was transmitted to counsel; and with little less celerity returned, with the mortifying declaration, "that the corporation could not maintain the power they had assumed;—that it would

would be prudent to admit the petitioners, and put an end to the contest." In consequence of this declaration, a chamber-meeting was held on the 7th of May last, and the petitioners were admitted Burgesses; the noble Earl, and our worthy Representatives graciously attending to congratulate the several claimants on their admission.

Much having been said of Mr. Cornwall's professions of attachment to the petitioners, and complaints having been made of the little regard paid to those professions, I shall take occasion to mention a fact, which will demonstrate whether the Burgesses gave due credit to this gentleman's professions or not.

On the 7th of May above-mentioned, as soon as the several claimants had been admitted, Mr. Cornwall moved in the chamber, "that, for the future, every person, admitted a Burgess, should be sworn in at a chamber-meeting, and not as hitherto on a common court-day;" which is every Tuesday in the year.

If this motion had passed, the right of admission, now restored to the sons of Burgesses, would have been useless and nugatory, as chamber-meetings sometimes are held but once a year, and the time of holding them is generally kept so secret, that persons admitted Burgesses, and living at a distance, would seldom have an opportunity of attending to be sworn; for want of which the
right

right of Burgesfhip would die with *them*, and not descend to their children. Besides, that out of many admitted at one chamber-meeting, some would generally die before the next, or time of swearing arrived; so that, by this manœuvre, the number of Burgesfes would be continually decreasing, and the old system of confining the right of Burgesfhip to as few persons as possible would have appeared in a new form, and, perhaps, have met with better success.—In justice to the corporation, it must be acknowledged that this insidious proposition was almost unanimously rejected.

The corporation having yielded to the claims of the petitioners, it was thought proper that an address to the Burgesfes in general, informing them of this interesting event, should appear in the public papers. A copy of it is here given, on account of the curious comment which followed it; and which, to evince our impartiality, still attends it.

To the Burgesfes of the Borough of Ludlow.

Gentlemen,

I beg leave to inform you, that in consequence of the corporation's paying no regard to the repeated petitions of the sons of Burgesfes, and others who claimed a right to be admitted Burgesfes of the town of Ludlow, an association was formed last summer; by some of the most respectable

table characters in this county, for the purpose of applying to the Court of King's Bench for justice to be done to these persons. A rule to shew cause was soon obtained. After a delay of several months, under the pretence of having necessary time to make a return to the several writs, the corporation have thought proper to submit, and the several claimants were, this day, admitted Burgessees.

I congratulate you, gentlemen, on the downfall of an usurped power, which the corporation have exercised for many years, with a design of confining the right of Burgessthip to as few persons as possible; and in which they had so far succeeded, as to confine it almost to themselves.

Your sons, and daughters' husbands, will now, without distinction, be admitted Burgessees. The party who have done all in their power to deprive them of the important right of voting for Members of Parliament, may, perhaps, make a merit of granting what they could no longer withhold. I flatter myself that such insinuations will meet with the contempt they merit; and am, Gentlemen, with great regard,

Your devoted humble servant,

THOMAS BLAINEY,

Agent to the Associated Burgessees.

Ludlow, May 7, 1782.

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To

To Mr. B L A I N E Y,

S I R,

I am sorry to see your name subscribed to an address in a public paper of the 11th instant. As a dependent character, Sir, it behoves you to avoid all personal reflections. I am sorry also to say that many insinuations, contained in the address alluded to, are illiberal, unmanly, and ungenerous. That cause must be very weak indeed, which wants abuse for its defence, or scandal for its protection. I profess myself as utter an enemy to undue influence, or to any, the least infringement upon the laws and constitution of my country, as any man breathing.

To the venality of magistrates—the incroachments of power—the injured rights of election, and to illegal representation, I shall, at all times, most cheerfully subscribe my disapprobation. With respect to the members of the corporation of Ludlow, I must say that I always hitherto have, and I trust never shall have reason to consider them otherwise than a body of men of the most unbiassed principles, of the most irreproachable conduct.

That man who resolutely stands forth in defence of the antient rights and privileges of his country, will ever merit applause from the virtuous and sensible part of the community. But I need not tell you, that what you have so recently

cently obtained, and what you so triumphantly boast of, is no part of the antient privileges of the ante-nati petitioners. But to descend to a more minute investigation of the matter, I have considered your address with every possible attention, and must beg leave, after what you have said, to relate a few out of many facts, in order to wipe off at least some part of the disgrace which you have endeavoured to bring on the corporation. Your charge of *usurped power* is equally unjust and illiberal. You must well recollect, Sir, that, at the last General Election for the Borough of Ludlow, two important questions arose. The first, whether the sons, and the husbands of daughters, who were born before their fathers were sworn, had a right to vote?—The second, whether the grandsons, and the husbands of granddaughters, had also a right to vote?—You must remember that the two candidates, the noble Lord and his colleague, applied to the ante-nati petitioners indiscriminately. That upon a report having been industriously circulated of their entertaining a wish to abridge the petitioners of their right, an advertisement immediately appeared, addressed by the two candidates to those very petitioners, requesting their votes, promising them their future support in defending their rights, and asserting their privileges. To what then does your general charge of *usurped power* amount?

Every impartial unprejudiced mind will not hesitate to declare it an assumption as false, as it is uncandid and disingenuous.

In another place, you seem as though you were anticipating a conduct that I will be bold to say, till the appearance of your address, would never have been thought of by any Member of the corporation. You say, "perhaps the party may make a merit of granting what they could no longer withhold." With how much more propriety might the opposite party have said, "perhaps the addresser and his friends are dissatisfied,—perhaps they wished to have gained a victory in the courts of law;—and perhaps the end of all their wishes was, that they and their friends might have had the nomination of members to serve in Parliament, or rather might have had the Borough at their own disposal; and then doubtless it would have been bartered for a good price." I have this moment heard it hinted, but how far such intimations are true I know not, that the address is not genuine—that in subscribing your name to it, you have only acted in pliant servility to another person. To what then can your desire of appearing in the character of a paltry newspaper scribbler be imputed, but to your vanity? Remember, Sir, the fable of the daw, *Ne moreat cornicula risum, furtivis nudata coloribus.*

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The only way to make yourself distinguished is to convert your vanity into emulation ; and as you seem desirous of making a figure in the literary world, you have nothing to do but to strain every nerve in study and application. Your merit will then command what you now seek in vain, and while you are ambitious of courting applause, you will not make yourself the jest and laughing-stock of your neighbours. One word more and I have done. You have business to attend to, let this be your first care ; never more be persuaded to risque the good will of your friends for a little empty praise, nor be led into the gratification of a passion, which, to gratify, is to forfeit every claim to the approbation of those whose good opinion alone is truly valuable. I have ever considered myself in a peculiar manner honoured by your acquaintance, and shall still be ambitious of calling you friend. Be assured you have my sincere wishes for your welfare, and that I am

Your most obedient servant,

PHILO-VERITAS.

Ludlow, May 14, 1782.

The

The following answer was returned :

TO PHILO-VERITAS.

S I R,

Mr. B. not thinking it worth while to take any notice of a letter addressed to him by an anonymous writer, as a common Burgefs, somewhat interested in the subject, I shall take the liberty of making a few remarks on it.

I shall not say that your observations are " il-liberal, unmanly, and ungenerous;" because I agree with you that " that cause must be weak indeed that wants abuse for its defence, and scandal for its protection;" and because I am conscious that the more the cause alluded to is known, and the better it is understood, the more the Burgeffes in general will be sensible of the services done them by the supporters, and of the injurious treatment they have received from the insidious opposers of it.

I shall pass over the parade you make of your patriotic sentiments, and the " unbiaffed principles of the corporation," because I believe the existence of the first as much as I do that of the latter; and only consider how far your objections to Mr. B—'s address are founded in reason and propriety.

I shall examine them in the order they stand; and, if in the course of such examination, I appear

pear to bear hard upon your masters, they must thank your indiscretion for bringing forward to public notice characters, which can only expect to pass without censure, as far as they escape without observation. You begin with "I need not tell you that what you have so recently obtained, and what you so triumphantly boast of, is no part of the antient privileges of the ante-nati petitioners."—You need not have told us this, 'tis true; and, in prudence ought not, as the assertion was likely to betray your ignorance, and expose you to contradiction; but as you have hazarded the assertion, I shall examine how far it is founded in truth. The privilege contended for by the petitioners was that of being made Burgeses of Ludlow. The corporation refused to admit them, on the pretence that they were born before their fathers were sworn. On an inspection of the corporation-books, it appeared that, from time immemorial, such persons had been admitted. On this ground the corporation submitted; and, allowing the claim of the petitioners to be founded on custom, or antient right, they admitted them. In the height of your zeal for the honour of your masters, you are not aware that, by asserting that the claim of the petitioners was not founded on antient right, you reproach them with advising the corporation unnecessarily to give up their privileges, and cast some censure on those gentlemen

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of "unbiaſſed principles," who ſo implicitly followed that advice.

Your next obſervation is, "that the charge of *uſurped power*, as applied to the corporation, is unjuſt." I ſhall prove the contrary, by taking a view of the conduct of the corporation relative to this matter.

From the year 1727, the corporation would not admit any perſons Burgeſſes, unleſs they were known to be attached to the intereſt of the late Earl of Powis. In 1767, William Pearce Hall, Eſq. ſon of a Burgeſs, and born *after* his father's admiſſion, petitioned for admiſſion, but was reſuſed. He applied to the Court of King's Bench for redreſs, and obtained it.

Finding they could not obtain a diſcretionary power of admitting or rejecting ſons of Burgeſſes at pleaſure, they began, ſubſequent to the laſt-mentioned period, to *uſurp* a power of excluding thoſe who were born before their father's admiſſion.

The petitioners complained to the Court of King's Bench of this *uſurped power*; and the corporation acknowledged the truth of the charge by voluntarily relinquishing it.

You cannot forget that a noble Earl told the corporation, at their laſt meeting, "that the matter in diſpute between them and the petitioners had been fully conſidered; that the books of admiſſion

mission had been carefully examined ; that the advice of counsel had been taken upon them, and that they were of opinion that the corporation could not support the power they had assumed."

Mr. B. made use of the word "usurped:" whether that or his Lordship's is most proper, I leave to grammarians to determine. In my opinion, every exercise of power, not founded on right, or established by legal authority, is usurpation.— You now quit the subject, or (to speak in a language you are better acquainted with) leave your brief, to bestow a little praise, by way of implication, on your employers.

I have no doubt that it was well received: it is the first offering of the kind they were ever presented with, and ought to be valued in proportion to its rarity. I will not pass any censure on it, as it may originate in a good motive,—a grateful sense of favours received; but beg of you, for the future, not to forget the Poet's observation, that

"Praise undeserv'd is satire in disguise."

You observe, "that the noble Lord and his colleague applied to the ante-nati petitioners indiscriminately; that, upon a report having been industriously circulated of their entertaining a wish to abridge the petitioners of their rights, an advertisement immediately appeared, addressed by

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the two candidates to these very petitioners, requesting their votes, and promising them their future support in defending their rights and asserting their privileges."

It is true that Lord Clive and Mr. Cornwall did promise the petitioners to be, "on all occasions, the asserters of their rights and privileges;" and it is no less true that, soon after, when this matter was agitated in the chamber, they not only did not say a syllable in support of their claims, but readily concurred in every measure taken to oppose them. A report did prevail, that the noble Lord and his colleague had received opinions of counsel, setting forth that the petitioners had no right to vote for members of the Borough. This was positively denied in a printed paper, subscribed with their names; though one of their agents, by indiscreetly shewing the opinions to his acquaintance, had established the fact beyond the shadow of a doubt. I remember to have heard, from good authority, that this paper was written by Mr. P. and as very probably his masters never saw it before its publication, they might not think themselves answerable for the truth of its contents, or bound to observe the promises it contained. I beg leave seriously to ask (and I do it in Latin by way of giving you a scrap for your cornicula)

" Quid

" * *Quid domini facient, audent cum talia fures ?* "

You need^{xf} not find fault with Mr. B—'s observation, " that, perhaps, the party may make a merit of granting what they could no longer withhold ;" because you do not understand it.

• " *Quid domini facient,*" may be judged from the following anecdote. About three-years ago, a letter came from government to the magistrates of Ludlow, enquiring if they could furnish accommodations for a certain number of French or Spanish prisoners. Some time after, Mr. P. told a tradesman of that place that he found he had applied to the Commissioners of the sick and hurt, who had the superintendence of the prisoners, for the agency; but that he had received orders from the Lords P. and C. to use their interest with administration to counteract such application, as he, in conjunction with several others, had promoted a race in the town of Ludlow, contrary to the known pleasure and inclination of those Lords. The noble Lords succeeded in their virtuous attempt, and another person was appointed.

The town of Ludlow had, for many years, excellent races, but the noble Lords, by carefully fixing them at an improper time, and advertizing them too late, have brought them (as indeed every thing else they have meddled with) into discredit and contempt,

At the period alluded to, they were of opinion, that it would be improper there should be any races, as *they* should be absent on military duty (though the noble Earl could neglect that duty, even when the kingdom was threatened with an invasion, to support his Candidates at the last Election) but the inhabitants, with a spirit that did them honour, subscribed a hundred guineas, and had races as usual.

By "party," you think the corporation is meant; but if it is considered how little they had to do with this business, it will appear that that term could not, with any propriety, be applied to *them*.

No chamber-meeting was held to consider of their situation, and to deliberate what returns should be made to the several writs they were served with. The good Knight (so dubbed by Mr. Burke on his return from his Welch expedition) always ready for ~~action~~ ^{action}, whether to contend with the sturdy Britons of the principality, or the no less sturdy Burgeses of Ludlow, formed a committee, at the house of a noble Earl, consisting of Members of Parliament, attornies, agents, sub-agents, &c. &c. from whence we saw him issue orders which lords, commoners; and even gentlemen of "unbiaſſed principles" submitted to without hesitation. This was the party alluded to; or rather the cabal that combined to oppose the claims of the petitioners; that employed counsel to discover, if possible, some defect in these claims; and, I make no doubt, now employs *you* to traduce their agent.

Your insinuation "that if the addresser and his friends had the Borough at their disposal, it would, doubtless, be bartered for a good price," is not worth notice. You do not believe it yourself,
and

and, therefore, will not succeed in impressing it on others.

Your mention of "a good price" naturally recalls to our minds that disgraceful period, when a seat for the Borough was given to an Irish Macaroni, in payment of a debt of honour due to a near relation of his; and induces us to believe that, if the treaty entered into with Lord H—'s son, at the last election, had not been frustrated by the nomination of Mr. Beale, the Borough had again been disposed of for a valuable consideration.

The gentlemen who supported Mr. Beale had two motives, which they are ready to avow to the whole world: One was to rescue the Borough out of the hands of a Peer, who unconstitutionally imposes Members on the House of Commons: Another, to send to Parliament a gentleman of independent principles, to oppose the measures of the late detested administration.

I hope it will never be forgotten, that in February last, when a motion was made in Parliament to discontinue the American war, the cause of all our sufferings and all our burthens, Lord Clive and Mr. Cornwall voted against it; and yet the former once told us, "That he had a due sense of his duty as a representative of the people of England!"

You

You shrewdly suspect that Mr. B. did not write the address—I will honestly tell you the truth, and could wish that you and your employers were equally disposed to do it.

The address was drawn up in the presence of several of the associated Burgesses, and signed by the Agent, as a circular letter, to be sent to the associators in the several counties.

It was highly imprudent in *you* to animadvert on a publication of this kind; as, whenever you have the good fortune to meet with the like honourable employment, you may, in turn, be exposed to the attack of some “paltry scribbler.” These words you apply to Mr. B. acting in the line of his profession, and giving necessary information to his clients. With much more propriety may they be applied to him, who, without any provocation, attacks a gentleman in the public papers; and after charging him with faults he never committed, and ridiculing him for mistakes he never made, concludes with insulting him with profession of friendship and esteem. It is not writing in a public paper that constitutes the paltry scribbler (the people of England draw much useful knowledge from this wide-spreading channel) but an artful endeavour to mislead, and, by falsehood and misrepresentation, make the worst appear the

the better cause. That *you* have not succeeded in doing it, is not owing to purity of intention, but want of ability. If you wish to do it in future, with better success, you must take the advice you give, "strain every nerve in study and application;" and, in process of time, you may attain the object of your ambition, and be capable of doing the mischief, which, at present, you have only an inclination to. If you will favour us with a specimen of your progress, from time to time, I shall carefully attend to your literary advancement;

And am, Sir,

With sincere wishes for your improvement,

Your very humble servant,

A BURGESS.

Ludlow, June 8, 1782.

I shall make no further observations on the parliamentary conduct of Lord C. and Mr. C. It is impossible to reflect on it without indignation, or to speak of it without contempt.

They have both had a fair trial; and the man, who has kept his eye upon them through two parliaments, and would be instrumental in any degree in giving them seats in a third, may be justly suspected of something worse than indifference

ence to the welfare and interests of his fellow-subjects.

His Lordship's friends speak of him as a proper person to represent the county.

Dull as the entertainment would certainly be, I had rather hear Mr. Hill speak for a full hour by the Shrewsbury clock, and mix the venerable name of Christ with the low politics of the day, than assist in giving him a successor, who would not be content with remaining harmless and insignificant in his situation. I submit to * Mr. H. whether, after the long fatigue his Lordship has experienced in his steady support of the Constitution, through two Parliaments, he ought not, like the coach horses (to which he so humourously compared the gallant Rodney) be permitted to

* It is much to be wished that this gentleman would confine himself to common-place observations, and ill-timed jests in the House of Commons, and not print them for the amusement of the public. Another sky-rocket, or cracker, be the explosion ever so gentle, if indiscreetly fired, might demolish the small remains of his political character which are left standing. When a Knight of the Shire tells his Constituents, in print, " that when he rises to speak, he is " so embarrassed as to be deprived of his senses, and that if he " could suppose that there was nothing but empty benches in " the House, he could make a tolerable speech ;" the Freeholders begin to think that they have got " but a midling, " so so kind of representative."

retire

retire to the rich pastures of Walcot, or Oakley-Park? Or, if he cannot be allowed to remain in idle innocence, and his friends are still of opinion, that a person of his Lordship's consequence cannot, with propriety, be out of Parliament, let him again submit to their respectful commands; and as the town of Shrewsbury seems to be weary of their patriot, let his Lordship offer them something of a contrary quality; and, after a fair trial, they may find it, perhaps, of as much service as specious pretences and delusive protestations*.

The mention of one patriot naturally brings another to our mind; and makes the transition from Mr. P. to Mr. K. perfectly easy.

Notwithstanding the report propagated by this gentleman's friends, I cannot believe that Mr. K. is serious in his intentions of representing the Borough of Ludlow. As soon would I believe that the man who had robbed a virgin of the object of

* See Mr. Pukney's "Thoughts on the American War." This pamphlet was circulated, with uncommon diligence, by the late Administration, as a full justification of their conduct towards America. The leading fact he affected to reason from was flatly contradicted by Dr. Franklin; and Mr. P. was under the necessity of submitting to the disgrace of acknowledging it in the second edition.—This worthy patriot voted for a continuance of the American war in February last.

her chaste desires, would have the assurance to propose himself to supply the place left vacant in her aching bosom. Besides, the Borough of L. is still ready to receive him, and, with meretricious forwardness, courts him to her gates; where he may again gain admission on the same reasonable terms which first procured him the gratification of his wishes.

Lord B. is said to be in arrear, and therefore not much in favour with his constituents. Being no longer Master of the Buck Hounds, and not receiving as much in one year as would pay for his election once in seven, he is under no obligation to get a seat in Parliament, and display his gratitude to the Minister. Mr. K. may, therefore, introduce his brother P. to his worthy constituents as a proper person to represent them in Parliament; and no one will call in question the propriety of the choice. The hypocrisy of the patriot will be as welcome there as the servility of the courtier. The harlot, who is paid for the favours she bestows, has no right to be nice in the choice of her gallants; but the chaste-maiden, who wishes only for an equal return of affection and confidence, and has been long amused with * false

* The Reader will recollect the many specious protestations made by Lord C. and Mr. C. when they were *candidates* for her favour in the year 1780.

promises

promises and broken vows, should be cautious how she again exposes herself to treachery and insult.

The man who imposed on her credulity, and recommended such characters to her notice, deserves every mark of her resentment, and ought never to be remembered but with indignation.

If he had any sense of shame, he would fly the presence of an object which must recall to his mind the unworthy treatment she has received, and the base measures he projected for her ruin and prostitution.

F I N I S.

ERRATUM.

The following note was accidentally omitted in its proper place, page 43, line 24, where the reference should have been placed, after the words, "a virtuous Administration:"—

"This was written when the Marquis of Rockingham was
— first Lord of the Treasury."

